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## TERMINAL REPORT

## SOCIAL STUDIES

March 1964 - March 1968

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## INTRODUCTION

This report is written with the idea in mind of presenting a survey of the social studies project within the TCCU primary teacher program in Afghanistan. The writer has examined the terminal reports of his predecessors and extracted from them those developments which appear to be significant. He is pleased to acknowledge the work of those who have pioneered in this particular field and to concede that whatever was achieved during this specialist's tour was as much an outcome of their work as it was of his.

The lack of understanding of Dari was a handicap which was never overcome. The bilingual character of the Afghans made it necessary to produce books and materials in both Dari and Pushtu which added time and complexity to the production problem. These factors must have created more difficulty in the beginning than they did during the later years due to the lack of trained Afghans.

The warmth and innate friendliness of Afghan teachers made working with them a memorable experience. By and large they were always willing to listen and appreciated any help given. I often sensed the attitude that they were willing to try to adapt to new teaching methods but physical conditions were so poor, administrative structure so rigid, and their individual training and knowledge so inadequate, that change was more than they could cope with. I wish to acknowledge the sincere cooperation of both my American and Afghan associates who made my work here easier and hopefully fruitful.

The UNESCO personnel were most cooperative. I wish to express my personal gratitude to John Allen, Project Manager, and to his staff of experts. At the Academy for Teacher Educators, the experience of working with a multi-national group of educators was most valuable. The association with educators from other countries such as Taiwan, Japan, Norway, Sweden, England and New Zealand disclosed that their approach to educational processes indicated broad areas of agreement.

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My daily association with the individual members of the Columbia Team has been most rewarding. Their assistance, patience and kindness will be one of the longest remembered aspects of the experiences of these past four years.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

Social studies programs in Afghanistan schools in general and in the primary teacher training program in particular were in the development stage in February 1964 when this specialist arrived. Although the term "social studies" was used widely, history and geography, the principal components of the courses, were taught separately in the traditional Afghan fashion, mostly without books or materials (maps and globes) of any sort, and without awareness of the objectives to be attained or the skills to be acquired.

It would be most unrealistic to report that this situation has been completely reversed. It has not, but the foundations of change had been laid by preceding specialists over a long period of years, and I presume to consider that my efforts have moved forward, in an orderly manner, the forces of change, and have broadened the horizon of those Afghan teachers with whom I have worked. These efforts were at all times part of a team effort, and the members worked together in cooperative endeavors as well as in their particular fields. The specialists in professional education, science, mathematics and social studies cooperated at every opportunity. Individual subject matter areas were covered at the same time. One might say that the best years during this specialist's term were from 1964 to August 1966 under the supervision of Dr. Robert B. Simpson when the primary teacher program was operating with a full staff of specialists in Kabul, Kandahar, and Jalalabad. Modern teaching patterns for science, social studies, mathematics, and professional education had been established by the specialists and approved by the Ministry of Education and were in operation in the Darul Mo'Allemein classes and in the laboratory school. Similar teacher training patterns had been established in Jalalabad, Kandahar, and Herat.

Elementary teacher training was the primary concern of the original Teachers College contract<sup>1</sup> and remained so until such time as new programs were added to the TC responsibility. These programs were related to teacher training and were added to provide training at a higher level in order to train Afghans to train teachers.

Simpson's terminal report<sup>2</sup> covers the early years in considerable detail and brings into focus the development of the various activities of the Team. His second report<sup>3</sup> covers explicitly the initiation and problems of the Emergency Elementary Teacher Training program.

Engleman<sup>4</sup> characterized the early contribution of the Team in the following manner:

"The initial years of the primary teacher program were spent in planning sessions and problem sessions conducted among D.M.A. staff members, administrative officers, counterparts, and teachers, give-and-take sort of seminars. Herein probably lay one of the most strategic and long-lasting approaches made by the Team at any time."

He further comments in speaking about early D.M.A. activities that:

"The staff, the Team and the counterparts become involved in a careful reappraisal of the needs and program within the school...content courses and sequences were reappraised and strengthened; the laboratory school idea was further developed."<sup>5</sup>

The Team's impact was felt throughout the teacher training system of the Ministry of Education extending as far down as the classroom. Admittedly by the time 10 years had passed, some of these forms of

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<sup>1</sup> King, A. Richard - Teachers College Contract in Afghanistan, Institute of Education, Kabul University 1967

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<sup>2</sup> Simpson, R. B. - Terminal Report, Institute of Education - August 1960

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<sup>3</sup> Simpson, R. B. - Terminal Report, Institute of Education - August 1965

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<sup>4</sup> Engleman, Finis E. - An Evaluation of Primary Teacher Education in Afghanistan, 1954-1967, USAID/TC, Kabul, Afghanistan, May 1967, p. 10

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<sup>5</sup> IBID - p. 16

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education had lost some of their effectiveness due to lack of a sufficient number of Afghans trained to carry forward the work. Also, as the ideas extended downward from administration level to classroom level, the problem of implementation became acute.

One could recommend the use of maps but the maps, a few at least, were locked in the Ministry storeroom. The teachers were supposed to request maps from the principal, who in turn sent the request to the provincial director, who sent it to the president of primary teacher training. But, the maps could not be issued because a certain friendly foreign power objected to certain boundaries as shown on the maps. The materials problem was too complex for most of the teachers and they very soon reverted to rote and the blackboard (if they had one). But the patterns were set and by 1964 the role of the specialists became one of filling in the blank spaces through supervision and attendance at the D.M.A. classes followed by discussion.

In 1964 there were four D.M.A.s, Kabul, Jalalabad, Kandahar, and Herat. Jalalabad was serviced from Kabul and Herat was serviced from Kandahar. A primary education specialist was posted in Kandahar along with science and social studies specialists and an English language specialist. In 1965 a primary education specialist was posted to Jalalabad.

The Barnes report<sup>7</sup> covers the Kandahar-Herat activities and contains descriptive material relative to setting up the practice teacher training program both in Kandahar and Herat. Here also the early operational patterns of laboratory school, cooperating teacher-practice teacher, and professional course sequences followed those set by the earlier Team members. Barnes<sup>8</sup> summed up the general problem

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<sup>7</sup>Barnes, Roland E., Terminal Report, July 1963 - June 1965  
Institute of Education

<sup>8</sup>Barnes - pg. 11

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of teacher training when he wrote, "Most teachers know of no other method (memoriter); few of them have had an opportunity to see other methods used or demonstrated. Moreover, they have little or no knowledge of basic principles of learning; terms such as discovery; critical thinking, learning experiences, and differentiation of assignment." Although these remarks were made to apply to cooperating teachers in the elementary schools, they also apply to the D.M.A. social studies teachers. There has been some improvement as observed in classes during the last year due to the impact of better teacher trainers (Afghans) and more materials being available.

The Kandahar social studies D.M.A. program was instituted by Dr. Griffin (1956-62) and expanded by Herbert Wehrly (1963) who was followed by Norman L. Friberg until October 1965. Mr. Friberg was not replaced.

Mr. Wehrly followed the patterns set down by Dr. Griffin, and set up a library in the D.M.A. This library was then and still is the show piece of the Kandahar D.M.A. As long as a TCCU specialist was in residence, the room was used as well as could be expected. After Mr. Friberg terminated, the Persian books went under lock and key, the picture books gradually disappeared, and the card catalog was never touched. The room became a classroom for all courses and fell into disrepair. The former librarian, an Afghan, had salary trouble and the whole operation ground to a halt.

Recently American Peace Corps Volunteers have been assigned to the D.M.A. and the library became part of a P. C. V. responsibility. The facilities are set up but the local management does not seem capable of sustaining the impetus created by the TCCU specialists. This example is an excellent illustration of the shallow penetration of an idea.

Another "library" was started in Herat by Mr. Friberg. The books were locked in a cabinet in the principal's office and were never made available to the students. Mr. Friberg made periodic visits to

the Herat school and greatly enriched the program with slides, motion pictures, and maps. He regularly utilized the USIS film library and friendly Ariana pilots delivered the films and sometimes the machines to both Kandahar and Herat.

By 1965 the maps, globes, and other teaching materials ordered by Dr. James Tipton arrived in Kabul. Sets of both geographic and historical wall maps were distributed, along with desk maps, globes, and wall charts. This material was most welcome and the specialist visited the schools (D.M.A.) to instruct the teachers in the use of the new materials. Follow-up indicated, however, that except where a specialist was present or when he visited the school, the materials were not used. Also, there was no tendency on the part of one teacher to share maps with another and there were not enough sets of maps and materials for all teachers. The Jalalabad map collection remained in a tin box until the arrival of the UNESCO expert in September 1967.

The Jalalabad teacher training program had been superimposed upon the lycee and the two groups shared the lycee buildings as late as early 1965<sup>9</sup> when the D.M.A. students were moved to a new site still unfinished at that time, but at least the students had their own school identity and did not have to walk from one side of the town to the other twice a day. Use of the new facility should have made school operation easier and perhaps it did, but the new rooms had no effect upon teaching materials and methods so the same problems continued to exist, with of course some new ones.

Dr. Tipton<sup>10</sup> had succeeded in arranging for the setting aside of a social studies room in the Kabul DMA and in procuring adequate tables and chairs to furnish it. Blackboards were installed and appropriate maps, charts and diagrams were displayed. Social studies classes would be scheduled to use the room on a selective basis. The idea was for

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<sup>9</sup>See Domidion, Terminal Report, 1966, p 8

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<sup>10</sup>Tipton, James, Terminal Report, 1964



each section to use the room at least once a week, but 12th graders had priority. This plan permitted the teacher to teach close to his material, and resulted in increased use of maps and charts since the teacher did not have to carry anything with him to the room. (The regular system used now is for the teacher to move from classroom to classroom at the end of each period.)

Such a room was set up in Jalalabad. Kandahar used its library. Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif did not have a room available. Kabul has a good room well furnished and with curtains to darken it for projector use and an electrical outlet. The problem now became one of scheduling. Recent visitation discloses that the tendency is not to schedule the room for its special use unless and until the specialist insists upon it.

The problem of textbooks or lack of them hung like a sword of Damocles over all heads all the time. Simpson<sup>11</sup> describes the details in his final report. The department in Kabul was pleased to turn over to the Ministry of Education in July 1967, Dari and Pushtu copies of texts for all grades from 7 through 12. These books were completed and printed in both languages as a result of the work of the counterparts assigned to the department.

The Primary Education Division continued the workshops according to past practice, which was to hold such meetings during the opening months of the first semester at each DMA. Fall workshops were held in Kandahar and Jalalabad and spring workshops in Mazar, Herat and Kabul. The nature of them may have changed somewhat from the beginning but in September 1964, this specialist participated in a series of meetings in Jalalabad. The plan was to instruct the subject matter DMA teachers in science, mathematics and social studies (history and geography). Only a very small number of teachers attended, the weather was miserably hot and one could hardly say the meetings were a success. The social studies specialist and counterparts worked on map reading and use in class. The timing was bad on this occasion because the meetings coincided with the opening of school.

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<sup>11</sup> Simpson, R. B., Terminal Report, 1966 Pages 32 - 33

The opening of school in Afghanistan is a long drawn out affair and subsequent meetings of this kind were therefore held later in the term when school was more settled into its routine. Later workshops were also concerned with the cooperating teacher-practice teacher phase of professional education and consequently, with the assistance of the Ministry through the provincial director, were well attended by many teachers. The wider scope of the workshops resulted in attendance by as many as 150 teachers, half the group coming in the mornings and half in the afternoon. The Krebs Report<sup>12</sup> covers the details.

As previously stated, the specialists' work consisted of filling in patterns set by our predecessors, providing materials to be used, and instruction in the methods of using them. The situation was no longer one of policy setting but of making realistic to the classroom teacher and the students, the concepts and practices of learner-centered instruction, and of bridging the gap between them and the rigid teacher-centered practices indulged in by the Afghan teachers who were products of the same rigid system. Naturally, the teachers taught as they had been taught and the method was completely acceptable to the inspectors. The lack of materials and textbooks made transition particularly difficult. In many classes which this specialist visited throughout the country and at all levels, the only book in evidence was the one owned by the teacher. Sometimes there would be three or four books (texts) available to a class of 50 students. The only way for the student to experience the material was to have it read to him, or lectured to him from teacher notes which the student took down word for word, memorized, and then recited in the high pitched sing-song rhythm which is required in the earliest mullah schools for reciting the Holy Koran. Materials and methods were the primary problems which could only be solved by the Ministry of Education and Afghan teacher trainers cooperating with specialists in specific areas such as science, mathematics, social studies and professional courses.

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<sup>12</sup>Krebs, R., Terminal Report 1967

The social studies department was fortunate in having counterparts and Institute members assigned to it who were for the most part conscientious and capable. In addition, several projects had been started by Dr. Clarence Linton,\* one of which was a book of Readings in Geography and World History. This specialist finished the editing and production of the book. Later it was translated into Dari and it is now in the hands of the Faculty of Education. Dr. Linton's idea of an atlas for Afghanistan became a reality when the department completed and printed a sixty-three page atlas in Dari which can be used by social studies teachers to supplement history teaching.

To meet the needs of the classrooms a series of seven cloth maps were produced by silk screen methods using native cotton cloth and ink. These could be colored with native-made crayons and were effective for classroom use. The Ministry of Education produced several thousand of these sets in the audio-visual center and they have been locked in a storeroom ever since!

Since the classrooms had no means of displaying large-size flat materials, we developed a crossbar hanging device designed from the native coat-hanging stands and installed them in Ebn-i-Seena, Kabul DMA, and Jalalabad. Over the years, these have become damaged but never repaired or replaced, and rarely used.

We also wrote and printed in Dari a book on Suggested Methods of Teaching Social Studies in Elementary Schools in Afghanistan which has been used since it was printed in 1966. The text was developed for use in the Emergency classes and has been used in the standard program and by teachers at the UNESCO-sponsored Academy for Teacher Educators.

Department personnel attended nineteen workshops where they planned and conducted meetings and discussion sessions concerned with social studies objectives, use of maps, use of audio-visual aids, including sand tables, mud boxes, wire materials and other easily obtainable native materials.

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\*Dr. Clarence Linton returned to Afghanistan at his own expense after his tour as TCCU Team Chief. He worked unofficially with social studies problems and materials as well as on other problems. This specialist was privileged to spend four days orientation to Afghan education with Dr. Linton prior to his departure in February 1964. Dr. Linton received a citation personally from King Zahir Shah in recognition of his services to Afghanistan.

The department also wrote an Analysis of the Afghanistan Constitution along with teaching plans and appropriate questions to be used in the ninth grade. This book has recently (January 1968) been placed in the hands of the Ministry of Education, Mr. Soraj and Dr. Popal for evaluation, revision and translation into Dari and Pushtu. Hopefully, the work may become useful in the Afghan school system because there is nothing generally available for use in the schools for teaching the youth of this country the vital aspects of the Constitution.

In July 1967, the program was transferred to UNESCO and in the ensuing months the group specialists and Afghan associates have gone back to their homes or been transferred to other departments, projects or schools. I was asked to work with the Academy for Teacher Educators until January 1, 1968 as an advisor.

This association has been mutually beneficial. I produced an analysis of the textbook needs in the DMAs of Afghanistan and served as an advisor on a workshop project in Kunduz. Later, I was able to conduct a one-week seminar in geography in Jalalabad.

The strength of any program lies in the men it trains, the quality as well as the number. This specialist had visions of using our trained personnel as teacher trainers in the various DMAs working out of the Ministry, each one having supervision over the social studies program in several schools. Transfer of the program to UNESCO changed the future prospects of these men who were subsequently moved into other work with one exception.

Prior to the changeover, Mr. Paktianie was transferred to the sociology section of the Faculty of Education. Mr. Serhang and Mr. Rahmati have become members of the Faculty of Letters in history and geography. Mr. Abhar is still in the United States finishing his work at New York University. Mr. Qasim Hashimi is a member of the Faculty of Education. Mr. Said Hashimi remains as an Institute of Education member and will doubtless be transferred to some other department when this specialist's tour terminates. The five Afghans mentioned are

the social studies field. It is unfortunate that their talents cannot be used to improve the present Ministry programs and to create methods of teaching to bridge the gap from teacher-centered to learner-centered social studies classes.

## SUMMARY

The educational system of any country is an integral part of its culture and its social system. Since social studies by their very nature represent areas of culture most closely identified with people and their government, any suggestion of change falls on a sensitive area of the national heritage. The specialists recognized the nature of this sensitivity and concentrated on matters of method and process rather than basic content. The emphasis was always on how to open up the minds of the teachers with their own materials. It is only when you are able to contact the teacher with something that is already his that you can successfully introduce new elements.

Afghanistan is in transition from old ways to modern ways. Just as surely as the truck has replaced the camel, the Afghan must adapt his thinking to compete with and to communicate with the other countries of the world. Isolation and a static society are no longer possible. "As agricultural, economic, health and educational developments increasingly affect their lives, changes in the externals of living are coming slowly (but with increasing acceleration). Changes in the mind, in ways of thinking will come even more slowly."<sup>13</sup>

Griffin, former Associate Chief of the Columbia Team in Afghanistan expressed the broader problem of education in southwest Asia when he wrote:

"A major task in education throughout the Muslim world is that of freeing the mind to deal critically with issues, to analyze, to search, to organize, to plan, to live in doubt, to suspend judgment, to question, to follow the scientific method."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Griffin, W. H., There May Yet Be Time, Institute of Education, p. 22, Kabul University, Kabul, Afghanistan 1959

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid

Through the medium of modern methods of teaching the social studies, the various specialists have attempted to bring to Afghanistan the tools with which the youth of this country may build a strong and independent nation. The libraries, professional discussions, encouraging mutual trust, lesson planning, visual materials, better textbooks, improved student participation, improved testing, more meaningful assignments, teaching toward definite goals, developing appropriate skills, introducing the many details of good classroom teaching, all combined, contribute to the growth of the Afghan teacher. Too often the American observer sees these activities performed poorly by Afghans in Afghan classrooms and under physical conditions, particularly in the winter, which are in no way conducive to good teaching or good learning. But the fact that the teacher tried is the important feature to be noted. One cannot praise too highly the Afghan teacher who persists under such adverse conditions, and there are many. He teaches under miserable conditions and low pay even for this standard of living.

When he could receive some support from the specialist and from administration, the teacher would try something new. The seeds of better teaching have been sown far and wide by specialists, summer sessions, winter sessions, workshops, seminars and visitations. Signs of better teaching are evident here and there, faint but discernible. There is much to be done, and who knows how much time in which to do it.

As is the case with any specialist in Afghanistan, I experienced all the road blocks, frustrations, broken plans, delays, misunderstandings, discomforts, illnesses, inconveniences, unfulfillments and postponements indigenous to the work. However, I also experienced the supreme thrill of seeing some of my ideas and materials being used in school rooms in sections of the country where I had never been before.

The tools of the trade have been left in the hands of the Afghans. What they will do with them depends upon the encouragement and support of Afghan educational leadership. There are some trained men and these,

too, with their skills must be properly utilized because improvement, reform and rebuilding must come from within the Ministry and not from foreign advisors.

Therein lies the key to progress.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Sami Hamid, President, Teacher Training, Ministry of Education

FROM: S. Hendrickson

SUBJECT: Recommendations

DATE: March, 1968

As the Teachers College, Columbia University specialist for social studies, it has been my privilege to serve as an advisor for four years. In this capacity, I have been able to make many visits to all of the Darul Mo'Allemeins and to work with the teachers in their classroom situations; to assist in the preparation and presentation of materials, to advise on the preparation of examinations, and to recommend methods and teaching techniques which should result in more effective teaching and more effective learning. In addition the Social Studies Department of the Institute prepared texts, materials, and audio-visual aids for student use.

I am fully aware of the limitations under which the teachers and the Ministry work and appreciate that improvement comes slowly. Both the lack of material and lack of adequately trained teachers have to be overcome in order to attain the standards which are the goals of Afghan education.

UNESCO has assumed responsibility for advising the Ministry of Education regarding educational planning for Afghanistan. The experts from this organization have proposed a national plan which will operate out of regional centers. This plan includes both elementary and middle school teacher training. Regional centers staffed by experts will provide an effective means of disseminating the principles of modern educational practices throughout the entire country.

UNESCO classroom procedures do not differ from those introduced by the Columbia Team in the DMAs. Since these were basic, the experts are continuing to use them and to extend these principles of learning into more schools.

The following recommendations are not new or different from those made by other advisers and probably you are more aware of classroom needs than any other official in the Ministry of Education. I wish to emphasize the fact that what changes take place must be translated into classroom practice to have any effect upon the student learning process. We know that teachers teach as they were taught. The classes of prospective teachers must be taught effectively and efficiently if we expect them to go into a classroom and perform efficiently.

The following recommendations will not involve any large expenditure of money. They could be used as guidelines or goals for teachers, principals, and inspectors:

1. The stated aims of Afghanistan's Constitution should be included in the social studies program at every class level. It is necessary to enhance the spirit of national pride and the Constitution of the country should be the instrument for doing so.
2. The Ministry of Education should establish educational goals which must be adopted for use in the social studies grades. They should be further refined as objectives or goals for geography, history, etc. The teachers must be made aware of the goals and strive to attain them. The objectives of each course should be identified and built into each course of study.
3. The reports from the various Ministries should be simplified and reproduced in pamphlet form for use as resource materials at appropriate grade level. The lack of information on the modern development and the industrial growth of this country for school consumption is a serious matter. How can students learn about their country if the teachers do not have data in useable form?
4. Magazines and newspapers should be made available to classroom. Pictures could be provided from reprints.

5. Encourage the distribution and use of teaching materials now stored in Kabul and in the schools' storerooms.
6. Experiment with and develop audio-visual aids made from native materials and capable of production in this country. There is no reason why the Cartographic Institute could not produce suitable classroom maps in sufficient quantity for the national school system. The Government Press has excellent facilities for printing. The resources of this country can produce Afghan material. These resources should be utilized for the benefit of the whole educational system.
7. Administrative pressure ought to be exerted on the teacher to become more effective in the classroom. If principals and inspectors encourage and support improvement, it will be made.
8. Principals and inspectors must understand objectives, too, and look for improvement. Usually they are content to let the old ways persist.
9. Concentrate on the new teachers. They will try new ideas. (We have seen this happen in the laboratory schools as well as in the DNAs.) The settled and mature teacher rarely changes his patterns nor his notes.
10. Steps must be taken to produce textbooks for the classes. The text is the most important teaching and learning tool in the educational system. This fact is so because of the lack of reading materials, particularly outside of Kabul. The texts should be accompanied by manuals for the teacher providing him with supplementary questions, exercises and ideas which will reinforce student learning.
11. Extend social studies teaching below the fourth grade to achieve readiness for the more formalized courses in history and geography which start in the fourth grade.

I would not recommend trying at this time to combine history, geography and civics into an integrated course. Such a course will develop by the teachers themselves when they perceive the possibilities of it.

The foregoing recommendations are made as logical steps in the development of an educational system as well as in the development of teacher training for teaching social studies. They have been made in the spirit of friendly constructive professional criticism. As a matter of fact, I know that many of the above problems to which these recommendations refer have already been identified as important and steps taken to solve them.